

## Virginia Department of Historic Resources

### PIF Resource Information Sheet

This information sheet is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the necessary data to be able to evaluate the significance of the property for possible listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This is not a formal nomination, but a necessary step in determining whether or not the property could be considered eligible for listing. Please take the time to fill in as many fields as possible. A greater number of completed fields will result in a more timely and accurate assessment. Staff assistance is available to answer any questions you have in regards to this form.

<b>General Property Information</b>	For Staff Use Only DHR ID #:
Property Name(s): <u>Monroe Avenue warehouse</u>	
Property Date(s): <u>1952</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post      Open to Public? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Property Address: <u>501 E. Monroe Avenue</u> City: <u>Alexandria</u> Zip: <u>22301</u>	
County or Ind. City: <u>Ind. City of Alexandria</u> USGS Quad(s): <u>Alexandria, VA-DC-MD</u>	

### Physical Character of General Surroundings

Acreage: 0.264    Setting (choose one): ☒ Urban   ☐ Town   ☐ Village   ☐ Suburban   ☐ Rural   ☐ Transportation Corridor

Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features: The building is situated on level ground within a rectangular, 11,508 square-foot lot on the southeast corner of E. Monroe and Leslie avenues. Lot 501 has 102-foot frontage on Monroe Avenue, and spans approximately 100 feet along Leslie Avenue. It lies immediately south of the Eugene Simpson Stadium Park, just west of U.S. Route 1, and northwest of present-day CSX railroad and WMATA metro tracks which are remnants of Potomac Yards.

Secondary Resource Description (Briefly describe any other structures (or archaeological sites) that may contribute to the significance of the property:

Ownership Category:    ☒ Private    ☐ Public-Local    ☐ Public-State    ☐ Public-Federal

### Individual Resource Information

What was the historical use of this resource? Examples include: Dwelling, Grist Mill, Bridge, Store, Tobacco Barn, etc...

Light industrial/warehouse

What is the current use? (if other than the historical use) Commercial

Architectural style or elements of styles: Art Deco

Architect, builder, or original owner: James N. Juliano, builder; William St. Cyr Barrington, architect

# of stories 1    Condition:   ☒ Excellent   ☐ Good   ☐ Fair   ☐ Deteriorated   ☐ Poor   ☐ Ruins   ☐ Rebuilt   ☐ Renovated

Are there any known threats to this property? **None known**

### Resource Component Information

Please answer the following questions regarding the individual components of the resource. If the component does not exist, answer "n/a." If you feel uncomfortable in answering the question, please leave the space blank. Photographs of the features can also help our staff identify specific feature components. Usually, priority is given to describing features on the primary (front) facade of the structure.

**Foundation:** Describe the foundation that supports the structure. Examples include piers, continuous brick, poured concrete.  
**Continuous brick**

**Structure:** Describe the primary structural component of the resource. Include primary material used. Examples include log, frame (sawn lumber), and brick. Also include the treatment, such as a particular brick bond or type of framing, if known.  
**Steel frame, cinder-block, brick**

**Walls:** Describe the exterior wall covering such as beaded weatherboard or asbestos shingles.  
**Brick laid in a 5:1 common bond, stone trim**

**Windows:** Describe the number, material, and form of the primary windows. This includes the number of panes per sash, what the sashes are made of, and how the sashes operate (are they hinged or do they slide vertically) Have the windows been replaced?  
**7 full-height, fixed-pane windows with 6 lights in metal frames; 1 large, multi-light, fixed-pane window that replaced a garage door. Yes, the windows have been replaced.**

**Porch:** Briefly describe the primary (front) porch. List the primary material, shape of the porch roof, and other defining details.  
**N/A**

**Roof:** Describe the roof, listing the shape and the covering material.  
**Flat**

**Chimney(s):** List the number of chimneys and the materials used. Include the brick bond pattern if possible.  
**N/A**

**Architectural Description of Individual Resource:** *(Please describe architectural patterns, types, features, additions, remodelings, or other alterations. A sketch of the current floor plan would be appreciated.)*

The Art Deco building at **501 E. Monroe Avenue**<sup>1</sup> was constructed in 1952 by builder James Juliano, who co-owned the property with Mildred E. Koplin, the wife of Juliano's business partner, Frank Koplin. It is one of five Art Deco warehouses developed by Juliano and Koplin along Leslie Avenue between 1952 and 1953. It was designed by a Washington, D.C.-based architect, William St. Cyr Barrington,<sup>i</sup> and it shares its south wall with another warehouse structure (1509 Leslie Avenue). The building first appears on the 1958 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia, in which it is listed as an Electronics Manufacturing plant. The square footprint of the one-story building is marked as measuring 20-feet in height. It is separated from its southerly neighbor by a cinder-block interior wall and comprises concrete floors, steel beams and columns, brick-faced cinder-block exterior walls decorated with stone, and a metal deck roof on steel joists.<sup>ii</sup> [Figure 1]

From the outset, the industrial structure was intended to either house light industry or to function as a warehouse or commercial space, and it has served all these purposes over the last six decades. Since 1955, the building has housed an electronics manufacturing business, an engraving shop, Avis Rent-A-Car, the Gold Crust Bakery, and currently M.E. Swing Coffee Company. This functional flexibility has necessitated repeated alterations to the interior organization, yet the exterior remains largely unaltered

<sup>1</sup> New construction permit #5386 from 18 March 1952 lists the address as 504 E. Monroe Avenue. Alexandria City Directories list the address for this building as 500 E. Monroe until some point after 1972; by 1988, the address is listed as 501 E. Monroe.  
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barring recent window replacement. The first alteration permit, filed only three years after the building's completion, signified a \$4,000 interior alteration by the lessee, Logetronics Inc. (an electronics company), which signed a ten-year lease on the space.<sup>iii</sup> In 1967, Lanman's Engraving (which used the building as an office while occupying the adjacent warehouse, 1509 Leslie Avenue, as a print shop) applied for two permits to undertake a \$10,000 remodeling job in which partitions and panel walls would be removed and relocated, new ceilings installed, and the floors tiled.<sup>iv</sup> When owners Greenhoot-Fisher Inc. applied to reroof the building in 1970, it was listed as a print shop and commercial space.<sup>v</sup> The most costly alterations were undertaken by Avis Rent-A-Car, which occupied the space as an office circa 1972-1989. In 1972, the car rental business hired contractor George C. Martin to carry out a \$55,000 "major remodeling" job in which partitions would be replaced and the lighting and heating systems updated. In 1988, building owner Paul Christon, on behalf of lessees Avis Rent-A-Car, hired TSG Inc., contractors, to commence an interior renovation that cost \$58,388.<sup>vi</sup>

The one-story masonry edifice is five asymmetrical bays wide by five symmetrical bays deep and encompasses 10,884 square feet.<sup>vii</sup> Two corner pavilions flank a central block, their parapet roofs rising approximately five feet above the building's flat roof. The exterior walls are brick, laid in a five-to-one common bond, with stone trim. The pavilions are quoined on three corners with full-height, fluted stone pilasters topped with Art Deco-ornamented capitals, between which runs a plain stone frieze underneath a stone cornice. The western pavilion is fenestrated with two metal-frame, full-height, fixed-pane windows with six lights situated on the north and west elevations; the eastern pavilion is fenestrated with a similar window on the east elevation while the north elevation has a multi-light, fixed-pane, metal frame window that rises from the ground plane and replaces a garage door. The central block has six windows, arranged as two triplets flanking the main entrance. All of the windows have simple stone surrounds and the two triplets are divided by fluted stone pilasters with decorative capitals. The centered main entrance holds two metal-frame, single-light, full-glass doors separated by a decorative stone pilaster which is carved like a fluted Ionic column topped by the visage of a Native American. The doors are topped with stone sills and brick panels comprising continuous headers. The west elevation bears two fenestrated pavilions, while the lower central block holds six windows divided by stone, fluted pilasters. The east elevation is similar, although it lacks the rear pavilion. The flat roof is coped in metal, and one exhaust vent is visible on the east elevation interior.

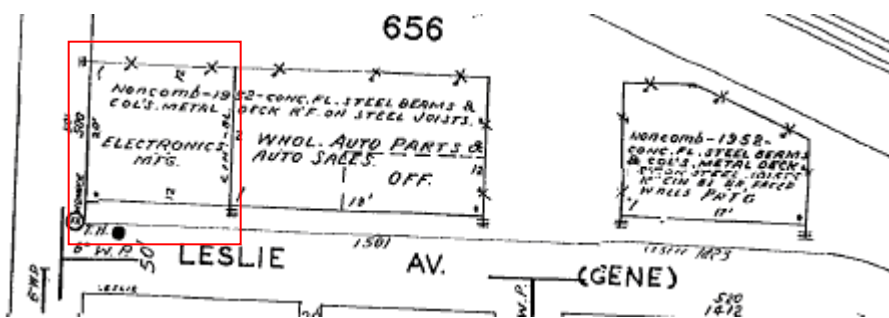


Figure 1: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia, 1958, Vol. 1, Sheet 46.

**Significance Statement:** Briefly note any significant events, personages, and/or families associated with the property. (Detailed family genealogies are not necessary.) Please list all sources of information. It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or genealogies to this form. Normally, only information contained on this form will be posted for consideration by the State Review Board.

The Monroe Avenue warehouse occupies Lot 500, a division of Parcel 1 of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad (RF&P RR), Map 204. [Figure 2] In the 19th-century, this land was situated within the Jefferson Magisterial District of Alexandria County, in an area known as East Braddock. Along with the Town of Potomac, East Braddock was annexed by the City of Alexandria in 1930. [Figure 3] The area remained rural and under-developed for the next two decades after annexation: the 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia shows the large parcel fronting Gene alley (later renamed Leslie Avenue), on which the Monroe Avenue warehouse would be erected 11 years later, as empty. [Figure 4]

The parcel lies immediately south of the historic site of the Alexandria Almshouse. In 1800, the city acquired nearly 20 acres of land outside the city limits and erected a two-story Georgian-style edifice to house the indigent and neglected. The house "stood on the northwest corner of present-day Monroe Avenue and Route 1, a location once known as Poor House Lane and River Road."<sup>viii</sup> The structure served as an almshouse for 125 years, until a new facility was opened in Manassas in 1926. In 1928, the building was sold to Robert C. Frame, who adapted it as a hotel. The City of Alexandria re-acquired the property in 1935 after Frame defaulted on his mortgage, and the Eugene Simpson Stadium was built shortly thereafter.<sup>2</sup> The city's Recreation Department used the house for storage, until it was demolished in 1952<sup>ix</sup> -- the year in which the Monroe Avenue warehouse was constructed.

The parcel across Poor House Lane<sup>3</sup> from the Almshouse remained an undeveloped woodlot until 1952, [Figure 5] despite the fact that the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad company opened "the Potomac Yards, a major railroad switching facility located [just east of] the Washington-Alexandria Turnpike (now Route 1)" in 1906.<sup>x</sup> Encompassing 450 acres, the vast Yards "was built for the joint use of a number of railroads to classify and interchange their freight traffic,"<sup>xi</sup> including the RF&P, the C&O, Conrail, the Delaware and Hudson, and the Norfolk Southern railroad companies. During the first half of the last century, the switching point was one of the busiest on the east coast, containing 50 miles of tracks which stored as many as 3,130 cars.<sup>xii</sup>

The RF&P railroad relinquished ownership of two parcels (Parcel 1 containing 88,252 square feet, and Parcel 2 containing 11,948 square feet) to Mildred E. Koplin and James Juliano in 1951.<sup>xiii</sup> James Nicholas Juliano (ca.1924-1997), a builder and real estate developer,<sup>4</sup> began his career in residential development with his brothers, Joseph and John, but went into commercial development with partner Frank Koplin circa 1945. One of the partnership's earlier projects was Mason Hall Apartments (1951) in Alexandria, followed by the Virginia Plaza Shopping Center, Gem department stores, and the Bradlick Shopping Center (1964) in Annandale, Virginia.<sup>xiv</sup> Before constructing the Monroe Avenue warehouse, Juliano built well-appointed warehouses in the vicinity: in a letter dated 10 March 1952 and directed to the Alexandria Board of Zoning Appeals, Juliano states that the board should not "worry" about the quality of his warehouse designs, as he already had built "beautiful" warehouses on Reed Avenue and U.S. Route 1.<sup>xv</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The house and athletic fields appear in the 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia, Vol. 1, Sheet 46.

<sup>3</sup> Poor House Lane was a dead-end road that was later renamed Washington Avenue, Arlington Avenue, then Monroe Avenue. See the August 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia, Sheet 31, inset.

<sup>4</sup> Juliano was listed in Alexandria city directories between 1950 and 1957 as having the occupation "president and residential manager," presumably of James Juliano, Builders & Realty Corp., the firm listed on new construction permit #5386 from 18 March 1952 for 504 [sic] E. Monroe Avenue.

In fact, the warehouse was designed in a high-style Art Deco by local architect and native Washingtonian, William St. Cyr Barrington (ca. 1898-1976).<sup>5</sup> Between the ages of 13 and 25, Barrington apprenticed as a draftsman for architect Jules Henri de Sibour, whose embassy commissions and Beaux-Arts style greatly influenced Barrington's own work. Barrington established his independent practice in March 1920, and his earliest commissions included houses in Georgetown and Kalorama as well as the Classical Revival-style office building at 1332 Wisconsin Avenue, NW (1924). By 1925, Barrington began designing night club interiors, including the Spanish Village club at 1304 G. Street, NW, followed by the Lotus Restaurant, the Heigh-Ho Tap Room, the Press Grill, and the Lucky Strike Tap Room, among others. In these works, he began experimenting with modern idioms of architectural design, such as the Art Deco style he masterfully executed in the Bari-Arms (1939) near Dupont Circle. In 1951, he designed the addition to the Hebrew Home for the Aged in district, considered one of his better-known works and last designs, although he practiced architecture in the city through 1960.<sup>xvi</sup>

Barrington's design for the Monroe Avenue warehouse monumentalized the structure and its banal purpose through the use of decoration and exquisite detailing. The significant use of stone, however, as an appliqué building material can be attributed to Juliano, who was the son of an Italian stonemason who immigrated to Philadelphia at the turn of the last century. Juliano's signature aesthetic was the use of stacked stone in particular, and his buildings reflect a continued interest in stone masonry and Italian craft traditions.<sup>xvii</sup> The warehouse is not only one of the finest examples of Art Deco in the area, but is perhaps a rare example of an industrial building in which so much attention has been paid to architectural quality.

The Koplins sold Lots 500-504 inclusive to Bernard M. Fagelson and Leroy S. Benheim in 1955.<sup>xviii</sup> As a trustee, Fagelson (with Max J. Fischer, Eugene Young, Jr., and Robert Young) sold the property to Greenhoot Inc. in 1972, which divested the property to Carol B. Fischer in 1998.<sup>xix</sup> Fischer sold the property to the Gold Crust Baking Company, the current owners, in 2000.<sup>xx</sup>

The building lies outside the boundaries of the Town of Potomac Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1992. However, the building should be considered either individually or as one in an ensemble of five adjacent warehouses. It is significant on the local and state levels as characteristic of the Art Deco style (criterion C); for its association with local persons of significance, including area developer James Juliano and local architect William St. Cyr Barrington (criterion B); and for its role in the development of the greater Del Ray neighborhood as an urban enclave (criterion A) concurrent with Northern Virginia's growing regional importance in the interwar years and the country's transformation from a predominantly rural to an urban character. It retains integrity in its setting, location, design, materials, and feeling.

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<sup>5</sup> There is some confusion about Barrington's name; other scholars have written it Edward William, William E., and William C. The name on the drawings for 501 E. Monroe Avenue is "William St. Cyr Barrington."  
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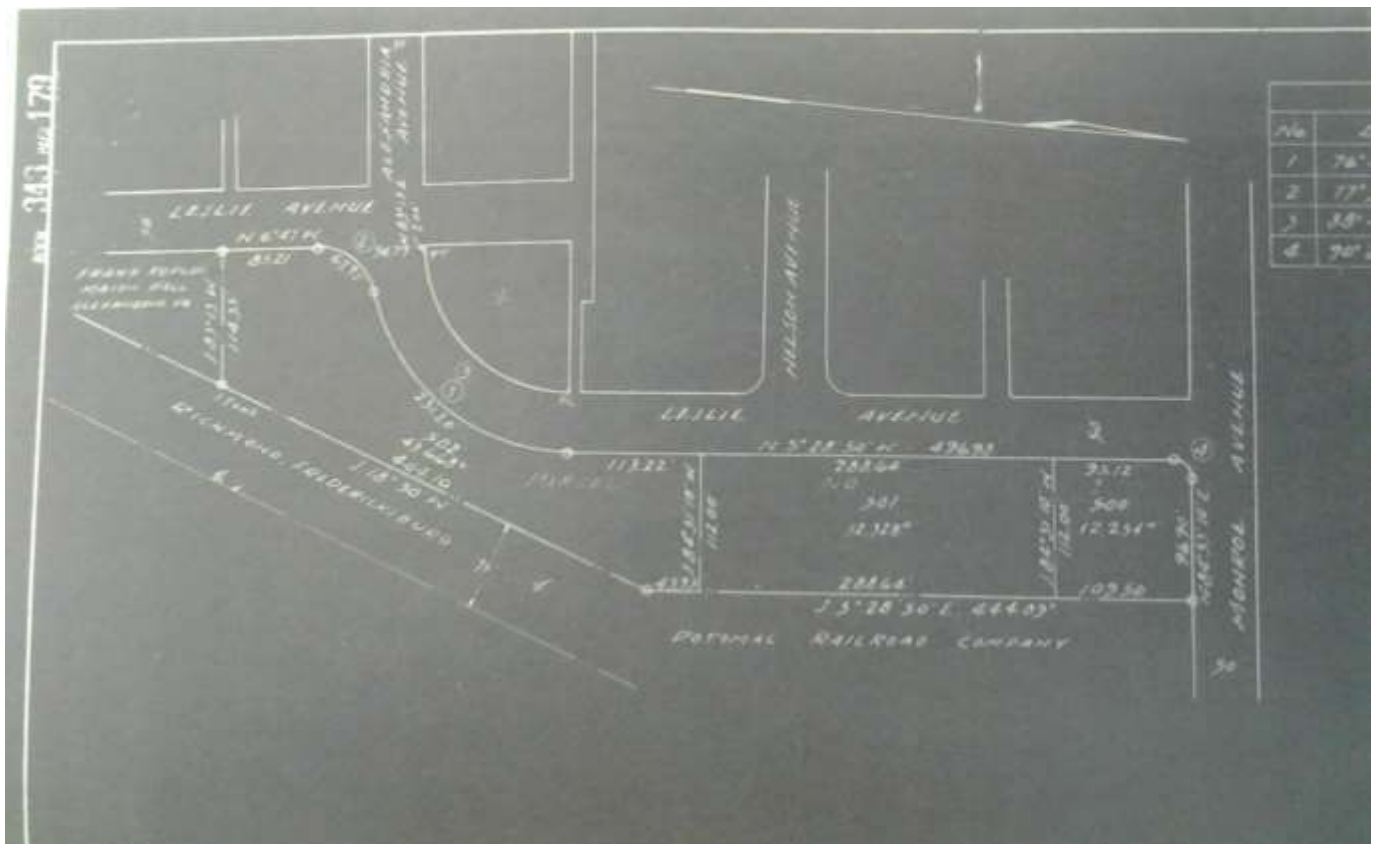


Figure 2: "Plat of R.F.&P. R.R. Land fronting Leslie Avenue," showing the redivision into lots 500-502. From Alexandria City Deed Book 343, page 177, 31 July 1952: Mildred E. and Frank Koplin and James Juliano, Dedication. Repository: Alexandria Clerk of the Court - Court of Records



Figure 3: Map of the City of Alexandria, Office of City Engineers, 1948. Repository: Local History/Special Collections Division of the Alexandria Library, Barrett Branch: Map collection, drawer 8.



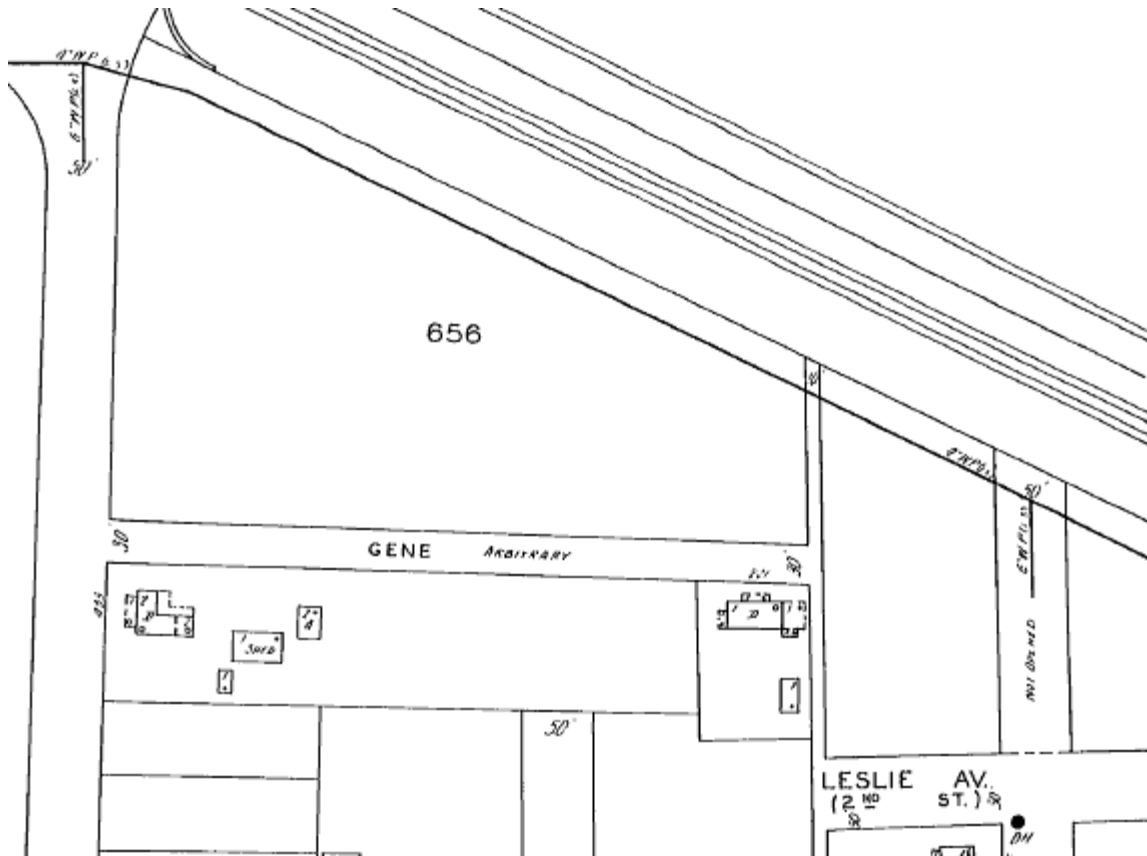


Figure 4: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia, 1941, Vol. 1 Sheet 46.



Figure 5: This 1923 aerial view of Alexandria Almshouse shows a small swath of the undeveloped parcel, Lot 501, in the left foreground, below Monroe Avenue before it intersection with Jefferson Davis Highway (U.S. Route 1). Special Collections, Alexandria Library. Courtesy of Lee Perna and Leeland Ness, "Almshouse," Del Ray Interpretive Sign, Historic Alexandria. Produced for the Town of Potomac Centennial in 2008 by the City of Alexandria. Accessed 8 May 2014 at: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/oha/info/OHADelRayAlmshouse.pdf>





1. 501 E. Monroe Avenue. Facade (north) elevation, oblique angle, facing 116° SE. Photograph by Gwen White, 4/6/14.



2. 501 E. Monroe Avenue. Facade (north) elevation, detail: decorative panel above main entrance, straight angle, facing  $161^{\circ}$  S. Photograph by Gwen White, 4/6/14.

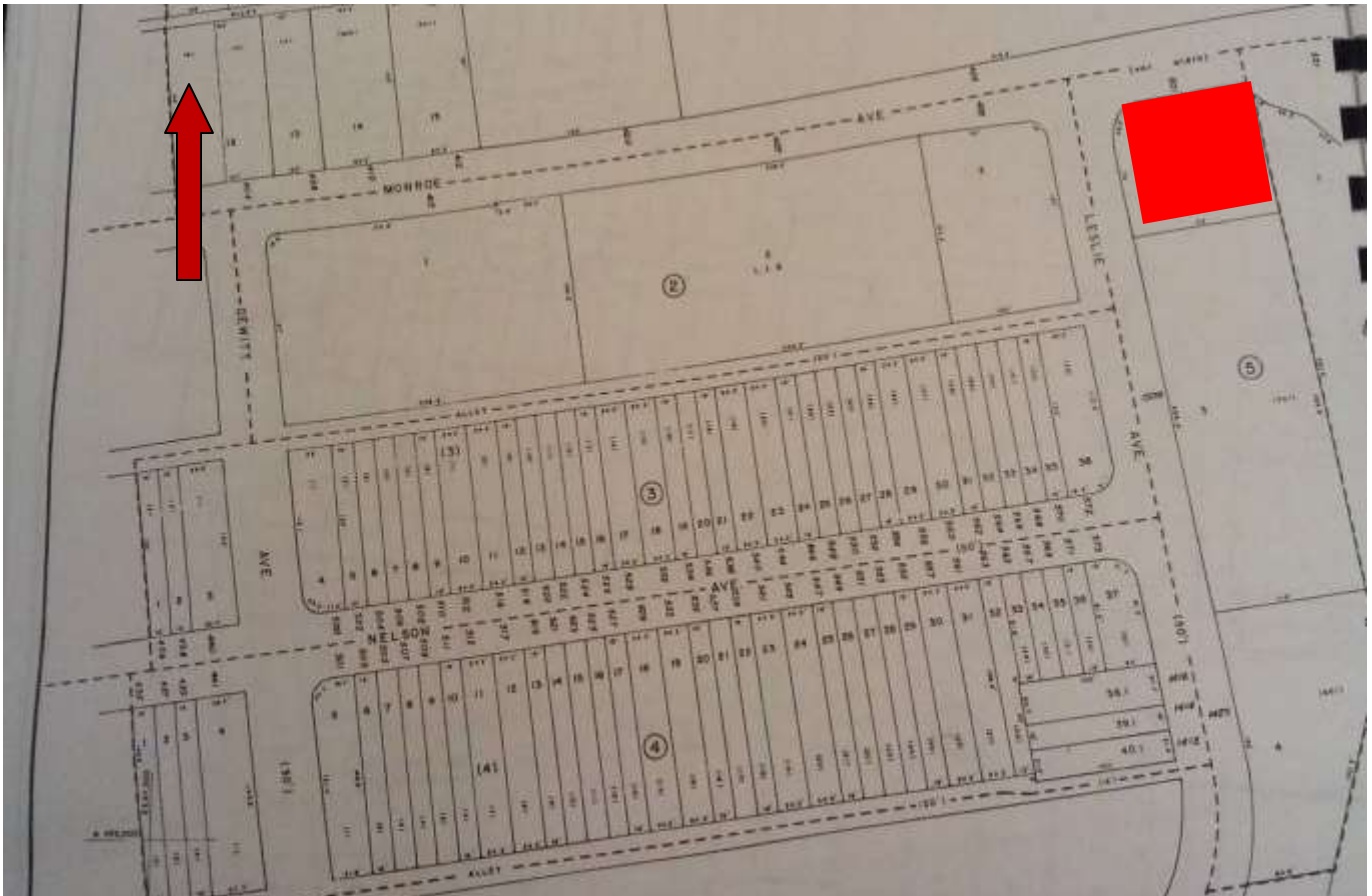


3. 501 E. Monroe Avenue. West elevation (Leslie Avenue), oblique angle, facing  $33^{\circ}$  NE. Photograph by Gwen White, 4/6/14.



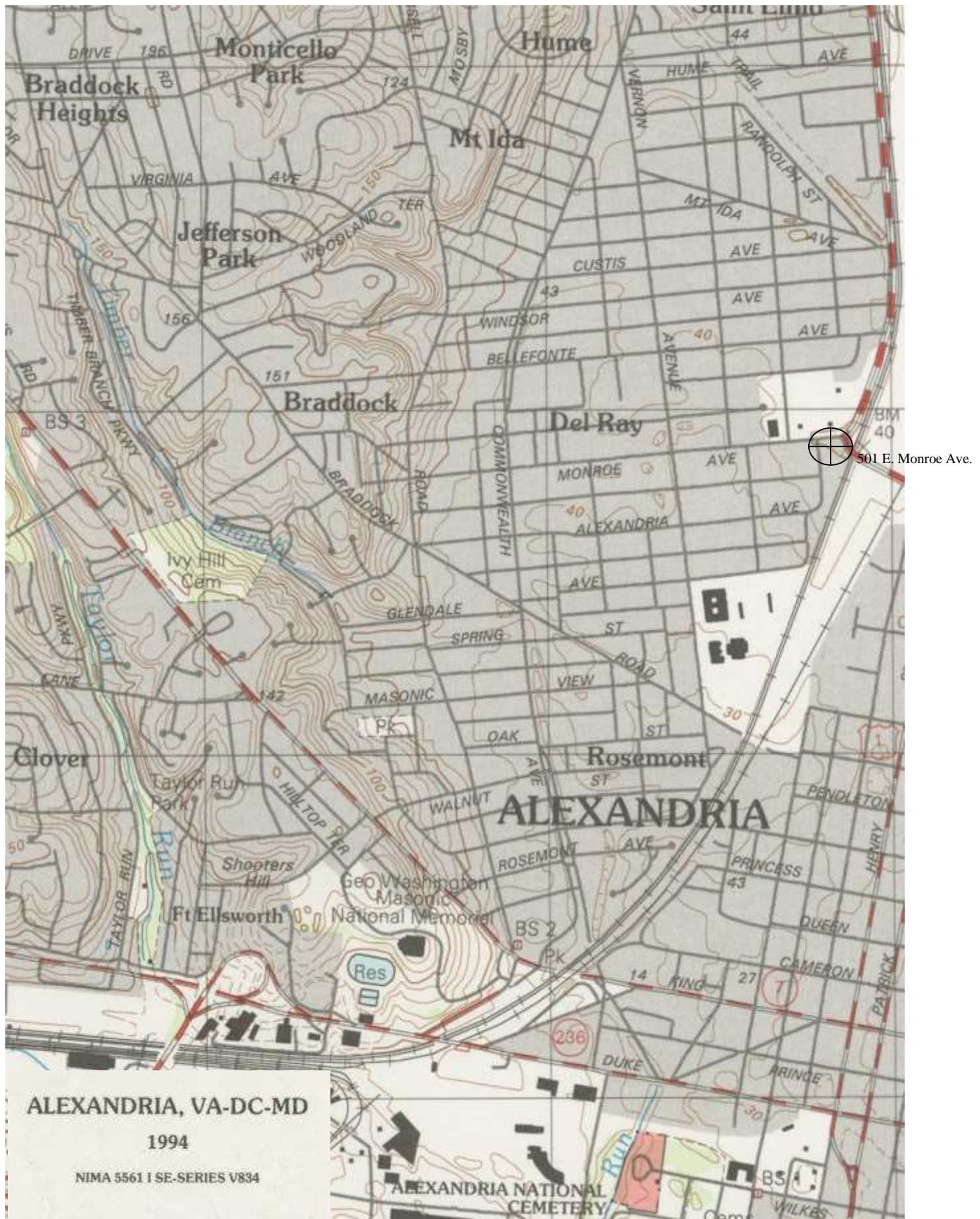


4. 501 E. Monroe Avenue. East elevation, oblique angle, facing 197° S. Photograph by Gwen White, 4/6/14.



Building outline not to scale.

2014.





## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> New construction permit #5386 from 18 March 1952 for 504 [sic] E Monroe Avenue. Builder: James Juliano, Builders & Realty Corp.; owner: Mildred E. Koplin and James Juliano (1420 Mt Vernon Memorial Blvd.); architect: William St. Cyr Barrington, Washington D.C. Plans and elevations are available on microfilm at the City of Alexandria Archives and Records Center.

<sup>ii</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alexandria, Virginia, 1958, Vol. 1, Sheet 46.

<sup>iii</sup> Alteration/repair permit #12484 from 2 December 1955 for 500 E Monroe Avenue. Builder: Fred Galinski; owner: Bill Cohen (lessee: Logetronics Inc.). City of Alexandria Archives and Records Center.

<sup>iv</sup> Alteration/repair permit #24021 from 17 March 1967 for 500 E. Monroe Avenue. Alteration/repair permit #24213 from 9 May 1967 for 500 E. Monroe Avenue. City of Alexandria Archives and Records Center.

<sup>v</sup> Alteration/repair permit #27086 from 16 March 1970 for 500 E. Monroe Avenue. City of Alexandria Archives and Records Center.

<sup>vi</sup> Alteration/repair permit #28967 from 11 February 1972 for 500 E. Monroe Avenue. Alteration permit #01867 from 19 September 1988 for 501 E. Monroe Avenue. City of Alexandria Archives and Records Center.

<sup>vii</sup> City of Alexandria Real Estate Assessment database, Account No. 13530000, Assessment Map 044.01-05-01. See also, Special Use Permit #2008-0047 for 501 E. Monroe/1509 Leslie Avenue, applicant: Gold Crust Bakery. Accessed 8 May 2014 at: <http://dockets.alexandriava.gov/icons/pz/pc/fy09/060209/di15.pdf>

<sup>viii</sup> "Out of the Attic," *Alexandria Gazette*, ca. 1980. From VF Monroe Avenue, Local History/Special Collections Division, Barrett Branch Alexandria Library.

<sup>ix</sup> Lee Perna and Leeland Ness, "Almshouse," Del Ray Interpretive Sign, Historic Alexandria. Produced for the Town of Potomac Centennial in 2008 by the City of Alexandria. Accessed 8 May 2014 at: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/oha/info/OHADelRayAlmshouse.pdf>

<sup>x</sup> Susan Escherich, "Town of Potomac Historic District," National Register of Historic Places, 1992, section 8: page 40.

<sup>xi</sup> Nan and Ross Netherton, *Arlington County in Virginia: A Pictorial History* (Norfolk: The Donning Co., 1987), 133. Also, Robert L. Crabill, "History of the Town of Potomac" 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., June 1993.

<sup>xii</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>xiii</sup> City of Alexandria Deed Book 329, page 92, 29 March 1951: RF&P Railroad Co., Grantor to Mildred E. Koplin and James Juliano, Grantees. Alexandria Clerk of the Court - Court of Records. N.b., derivation notes only that the land was conveyed to Washington Southern Railway Co., the predecessor of the RF&P RR Co., n.d.

<sup>xiv</sup> "Washington Area Builder, Developer," obit., *The Washington Post* (2 August 1997): C4.

<sup>xv</sup> New construction permit # 5385 from 29 March 1952 for 1509 Leslie Avenue. City of Alexandria Archives and Records Center.

<sup>xvi</sup> Kent C. Boese, "Hebrew Home for the Aged & the Jewish Social Services Agency," Application for Historic Landmark or Historic District Designation, Government of the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office, 2014. Accessed 8 May 2014 at:

<http://planning.dc.gov/DC/Planning/Planning%20Publication%20Files/OP/HP/Pending%20Landmarks/Hebrew%20Home%20nom%20complete.pdf>

<sup>xvii</sup> James Juliano, Jr. Telephone interview with Heather McMahon, 26 April 2014.

<sup>xviii</sup> City of Alexandria Deed Book 417, page 550, 30 September 1955: Mildred E. and Frank Koplin, Grantors to Bernard M. Fagelson and Leroy S. Benheim, Grantees. Alexandria Clerk of the Court - Court of Records.

<sup>xix</sup> City of Alexandria Deed Book 745, page 363, 25 April 1972 Bernard M. Fagelson, Trustee, Max J. Fischer, Eugene Young, Jr., and Robert Young, Grantors to Greenhoot Inc., Grantee. City of Alexandria Deed Book 1626, page 242, 8 January 1998: Greenhoot Inc., Grantor to Carol B. Fischer, Grantee. Alexandria Clerk of the Court - Court of Records.

<sup>xx</sup> City of Alexandria Instrument Number 000002715, 15 February 2000: Carol B. and Max Fischer, Robert Young, et.al., Grantors to Gold Crust Baking Co., Grantee. Alexandria Clerk of the Court - Court of Records.